

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/AFN:WSWEISLOGEL

APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTONJR.

NEA:ARLAY

S/S: CABORG

E - MR. ROBINSON (INFO)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 041696 TOSEC 040146

NODIS

FOR SECRETARY FROM ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SS, MO, AG

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: SPANISH SAHARA -- ALGERIAN
APPROACH AND ATHERTON TRAVEL TO MOROCCO AND ALGERIA
(S/S NO. 7603610)

REF: SECTO 4034

1. IN ACCORDANCE INSTRUCTIONS REFTL, I AM PLANNING VISITS
TO MOROCCO AND ALGERIA BETWEEN FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 1. VISIT
TO ALGIERS WILL BE TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH CHUCK ROBINSON'S.
BELOW ARE PROPOSED TEXTS OF CABLES TO AMBASSADORS PARKER
AND NEUMANN PROVIDING BACKGROUND, INFORMING THEM OF MY
INTENDED VISIT AND INSTRUCTING THEM TO ASCERTAIN FROM HOST
GOVERNMENTS THAT SUCH VISIT AND PROPOSED TIMING CONVENIENT
AND REQUESTING MEETINGS WITH BOUMEDIENE AND HASSAN.

2. AFTER CONSIDERING MERITS OF VISITING ALGERIA OR MOROCCO
FIRST, I WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION THAT
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STOPPING FIRST IN RABAT HAS THE MOST ADVANTAGES, PROVIDED

HASSAN AGREED TO THIS SEQUENCE. ON MY LAST TRIP TO THE AREA, I VISITED ALGIERS FIRST AND MOROCCANS INDICATED IN LOW KEY WAY THEY WOULD HAVE PREFERRED IT THE OTHER WAY AROUND. IF I HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK FIRST WITH

HASSAN, AND PARTICULARLY IF HE SUGGESTS ANYTHING ON THE SELF-DETERMINATION QUESTION, THIS MIGHT BE USEFUL IN MY SUBSEQUENT TALK WITH BOUMEDIENE. AT THE LEAST, I COULD INFORM BOUMEDIENE THAT I HAD DISCUSSED THIS ISSUE WITH HASSAN. SHOULD I GO TO ALGIERS FIRST, THIS MIGHT RESULT IN MY REPORTING TO HASSAN A TOUGH STAND ON THE PART OF BOUMEDIENE, WHO WOULD EXPECT US TO CONVEY HASSAN'S REACTION TO HIM WHICH WOULD INCREASE PRESSURE ON US TO GET CLOSER TO A MEDIATOR ROLE THAN WE SHOULD LIKE. IF, AS SEEMS LIKELY, THERE IS NO REAL GIVE IN HASSAN'S POSITION, SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH BOUMEDIENE COULD BE USED TO GET OUR MESSAGE ACROSS TO HIM (PROPOSED TALKING POINTS BY SEPTTEL) WHILE AVOIDING RAISING HOPES THAT THERE WAS ANY MORE WE COULD DO FOR ALGERIA ON SAHARA QUESTION.

3. FOLLOWING FOR YOUR APPROVAL ARE PROPOSED TEXTS OF CABLES TO RABAT AND ALGIERS.

BEGIN TEXT:

IMMEDIATE ALGIERS
EXDIS; FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SECRETARY
EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SS, MO, AG
SUBJECT: ATHERTON TRAVEL TO MOROCCO AND ALGERIA

A. LAST WEEK, RACHID ZEGHAR, ALGERIAN BUSINESSMAN AND CONFIDANT OF BOUMEDIENE, TALKED WITH UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON EXPRESSING DEEP CONCERN THAT US POSITION ON SAHARA THREATENS SERIOUS DETERIORATION IN US-GOA RELATIONS AND INDICATING THAT IF HASSAN DOES NOT HONOR PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION BOUMEDIENE IS PREPARED TO ENGAGE IN PROLONGED CONFRONTATION WITH GOM. ZEGHAR SAID BOUMEDIENE WOULD BE FORCED TO TURN TO SOVIETS FOR MORE DIRECT SUPPORT, BUT PREFERS NOT
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TO MOVE IN THIS DIRECTION IF HE CAN FIND FACESAVING WAY OUT OF CURRENT IMPASSE. HE APPEALED FOR EVEN-HANDED US POLICY ON SAHARA AND ASKED US TO INTERVENE TO PERSUADE HASSAN TO ACCEPT REFERENDUM IN SAHARA. ZEGHAR RECOMMENDED THAT I VISIT ALGIERS TO MEET WITH BOUMEDIENE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO DISCUSS PROBLEM, OR IF I WAS UNABLE TO DO SO, THAT ATHERTON SEE BOUMEDIENE. IT IS CLEAR ZEGHAR WAS ACTING WITH BOUMEDIENE'S BLESSINGS AND THAT BOUMEDIENE

EXPECTED US RESPONSE.

B. ZEGHAR WAS TOLD THAT OUR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE HASSAN WAS LIMITED, RECALLING UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO GET HASSAN TO CALL OFF GREEN MARCH. ALSO, HE WAS REMINDED OF REALITY THAT MOROCCO IS NOW IN SAHARA AND GIVEN REGIME'S POLITICAL INVESTMENT IN THE AREA NEITHER WE NOR ANYONE ELSE COULD PREVAIL ON GOM TO WITHDRAW OR SEEK A REFERENDUM. WE ASSURED ZEGHAR THAT WE WANTED TO PRESERVE OUR GOOD RELATIONS WITH BOTH MOROCCO AND ALGERIA AND HOPED THEY WOULD PEACEFULLY RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES AND AVOID INTERNATIONALIZATION OF ISSUE. WE PROMISED TO CONSIDER ALGERIA'S VIEWS.

C. I HAVE DECIDED WE SHOULD RESPOND TO THIS APPROACH, AND HAVE INSTRUCTED ATHERTON TO ACCOMPANY ROBINSON ON ALGIERS VISIT AND ALSO TO VISIT RABAT FOR TALK WITH HASSAN. I WANT TO DO ALL POSSIBLE IN THIS WAY TO MAINTAIN DIALOGUE WITH BOUMEDIENE AND DISABUSE HIM TO EXTENT POSSIBLE OF MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT USG POLICY, WHILE AVOIDING BEING DRAWN INTO ANY KIND OF MEDIATING ROLE OR AROUSING EXPECTATIONS THAT WE CAN EFFECT ANY FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN MOROCCAN SAHARA POLICY.

D. YOU SHOULD MAKE ORAL APPROACH TO GOA, REFERRING TO THE ZEGHAR CONVERSATIONS IN WASHINGTON AND SAYING I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE ATHERTON ACCOMPANY UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON TO ALGIERS SPECIFICALLY TO ADDRESS QUESTION OF SAHARA WHICH WE ASSUME BOUMEDIENE WILL WANT TO RAISE. ATHERTON WOULD PLAN TO STOP IN RABAT ENROUTE TO ALGIERS, ARRIVING IN ALGIERS FEBRUARY 27. HE WILL THUS HAVE BENEFIT OF A PRIOR EXCHANGE WITH KING HASSAN, WHICH SHOULD MAKE MEETING WITH BOUMEDIENE MORE MEANINGFUL. YOU
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SHOULD EXPRESS HOPE THAT SUCH A VISIT WILL BE CONVENIENT AND THAT BOUMEDIENE WOULD BE ABLE TO RECEIVE ATHERTON ON FEBRUARY 29 IF POSSIBLE OR MARCH 1, EITHER CONJOINTLY WITH ROBINSON OR IN SEPARATE MEETING.

E. YOU SHOULD CONVEY GIST PARA D ABOVE TO GOA URGENTLY AND INFORM DEPT NEA/ATHERTON OF RESPONSE BY IMMEDIATE CABLE REPEATED TO ME.

END TEXT TO ALGIERS.

4. BEGIN TEXT TO RABAT.

IMMEDIATE RABAT
EXDIS; FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SECRETARY

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SS, MO, AG

SUBJECT: ATHERTON TRAVEL TO MOROCCO AND ALGERIA

A. LAST WEEK, RACHID ZEGHAR, ALGERIAN BUSINESSMAN AND CONFIDANT OF BOUMEDIENE, TALKED WITH UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON EXPRESSING DEEP CONCERN THAT US POSITION ON SAHARA THREATENS SERIOUS

DETERIORATION IN US-GOA RELATIONS AND INDICATING THAT IF HASSAN DOES NOT HONOR PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION BOUMEDIENE IS PREPARED TO ENGAGE IN PROLONGED CONFRONTATION WITH GOM. ZEGHAR SAID BOUMEDIENE WOULD BE FORCED TO TURN TO SOVIETS FOR MORE DIRECT SUPPORT, BUT PREFERS NOT TO MOVE IN THIS DIRECTION IF HE CAN FIND FACESAVING WAY OUT OF CURRENT IMPASSE. HE APPEALED FOR EVEN-HANDED US POLICY ON SAHARA AND ASKED US TO INTERVENE TO PERSUADE HASSAN TO ACCEPT REFERENDUM IN SAHARA. ZEGHAR RECOMMENDED THAT I VISIT ALGIERS TO MEET WITH BOUMEDIENE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO DISCUSS PROBLEM, OR IF I WAS UNABLE TO DO SO, THAT ATHERTON SEE BOUMEDIENE. IT IS CLEAR ZEGHAR WAS ACTING WITH BOUMEDIENE'S BLESSINGS AND THAT BOUMEDIENE EXPECTED US RESPONSE.

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C. UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON HAS FOR SOME TIME SCHEDULED A VISIT TO ALGIERS FOR DISCUSSIONS OF CIEC AND BILATERAL ECONOMIC MATTERS. RECENT COMMUNICATION FROM EMBASSY ALGIERS INDICATED BOUMEDIENE ALSO WANTED TO TALK WITH ROBINSON ABOUT SAHARA QUESTION. IN LIGHT OF ZEGHAR'S REQUEST AND OF BOUMEDIENE'S DESIRE TO DISCUSS SAHARA, I HAVE INSTRUCTED ATHERTON TO ACCOMPANY ROBINSON TO ALGIERS AND ALSO TO STOP IN RABAT IF THIS IS AGREEABLE TO GOM. FYI. OUR FEELING IS THAT HASSAN WOULD PREFER ATHERTON VISIT MOROCCO BEFORE ALGIERS, TO UNDERLINE IMPORTANCE OF US-MOROCCAN RELATIONS, BUT IN INFORMING GOM OF HIS PLANS YOU SHOULD MAKE CLEAR WE WILL BE GUIDED BY MOROCCAN

PREFERENCES AS TO ORDER OF VISITS. YOU SHOULD ALSO KNOW THAT WE DO NOT RPT NOT ENVISAGE BEING DRAWN INTO ANY KIND OF MEDIATOR ROLE ON SAHARA DISPUTE. END FYI.

D. ATHERTON WOULD PLAN TO ARRIVE IN RABAT ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT, FEBRUARY 25, AND HOPES THAT HASSAN COULD RECEIVE HIM ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26 SO HE COULD PROCEED TO ALGIERS FEBRUARY 27 (WE UNDERSTAND THERE ARE NO FLIGHTS TO ALGIERS ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, WHICH IS DATE BY WHICH ATHERTON MUST BE THERE TO CONNECT UP WITH ROBINSON).

YOU SHOULD URGENTLY INFORM GOM OF ATHERTON TRAVEL PLANS ALONG LINES PARA C ABOVE AND ASCERTAIN WHETHER GOM IS RECEPTIVE TO SUCH A VISIT AND REQUEST AN AUDIENCE FOR HIM WITH KING HASSAN ON FEBRUARY 26. PLEASE INFORM DEPT NEA/ ATHERTON OF GOM RESPONSE BY IMMEDIATE CABLE REPEATED TO ME.

END TEXT TO RABAT.

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5. RECOMMENDATION:

THAT YOU APPROVE ABOVE CABLES TO ALGIERS AND RABAT AND TRANSMIT THEM TO POSTS FROM USDEL.
APPROVE . DISAPPROVE

6. SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS FOR ATHERTON MEETINGS WITH HASSAN AND BOUMEDIENE AND PROPOSED TEXT OF LETTER FROM YOU TO BOUMEDIENE BEING SENT SEPTELS. INGERSOLL

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